

FOR GRATUITOUS DISTRIBUTION.

SKETCHES
OF
CALIFORNIA.

AN ACCOUNT OF THE
LIFE, MANNERS AND CUSTOMS
OF THE
INHABITANTS.

ITS HISTORY, CLIMATE, SOIL, PRODUCTIONS, &c.

By **FREDERICK A. GAY.**



ALSO

INTERESTING INFORMATION

IN RELATION TO THE

CANCHALAGUA,
A CALIFORNIAN PLANT
OF RARE MEDICINAL VIRTUES.

1849

Letter from JOHN C. JONES, ESQ., formerly CONSUL OF THE UNITED STATES,
at the Sandwich Islands, and for many years a resident of California.

BOSTON, December 10th, 1846.

MY DEAR SIR :

I think you have done wisely in ordering a supply of the CANCHALAGUA from *California*; and I hope you may not be disappointed in procuring the quantity you may desire. By late accounts from that quarter we have learnt that there has been an abundance of rain, which renders it more probable that the quantity which you may have ordered of that valuable plant may be procured.

I have no doubt whatever that you will do well in introducing the use of it into this country; indeed, it has always been a matter of great astonishment to me that its valuable properties have not, long ere this, been made known to the world; and its wonderful qualities placed it amongst the most important articles in the *Materia Medica*.

I do not know if the CANCHALAGUA be indigenous to the West Coast of this continent, or not; it certainly flourishes most luxuriantly in the department of *California*, and is esteemed by the inhabitants of that country, as almost a sovereign antidote for every disease which attacks the human frame.

The *Californians*, regularly every year, at the season of the plant, collect for their families a sufficient quantity to last until the returning season; a scarcity of it is considered a public calamity; and the *females*, in particular, feel more anxious to know that a *quantum sufficit* of this *sine qua non* to the establishment of health, has been secured, than they do, to be assured of the actual necessities of life.

The accounts which you have collected from so many various sources, of the wonderful medicinal efficacy of the *Canchalagua*, are not in least exaggerated, and can be implicitly relied upon as correct.

My own experience has shown me, in very many cases, during a residence of some years in *Alta California*, how almost certain it is to break up a fever, and of its powerful effect as a tonic to strengthen the patient, after the fever has left; indeed, taken as a tonic merely, it surpasses all others, in its strengthening qualities, which have come under my observation. In cases of FEVER and AGUE, with the *Mexicans and Californians*, the *Canchalagua* is the *sole remedy*; and seldom, if ever, does it fail in its efficacy.

SARSAPARILLA grows in abundance on the West Coast of Mexico, but the inhabitants seldom make use of it; in all cases giving the preference to the *Cunchalagua*, which possesses the same powers, but with more speedy and decided effect.

The *Cunchalagua*, according to my observation, acts principally upon the blood, purifying it, and restoring it from a diseased state, to that which gives it the most healthy action. Amongst the *Californians*, it is the universal custom, as the warm weather approaches, for almost every adult member of their families to go through a regular course of the *Canchalagua*; that is, they take an infusion of the plant three or four times during the day, for perhaps a week or ten days; the blood then becomes pure and thin, and they are enabled to endure the greatest fatigues, and to maintain a comfortable state of health during the period of most excessive heat. By a course of the *Canchalagua*, the whole system appears to undergo a radical change; the partaker seems to receive a thorough purification, elasticity is given to his whole frame, his bilious secretions are regulated, his bowels restored to healthy action, his powers of digestion strengthened and his general health firmly established.

SKETCHES OF CALIFORNIA,

ITS HISTORY, CLIMATE, SOIL, PRODUCTIONS, &c.

AND AN ACCOUNT OF THE
LIFE, MANNERS AND CUSTOMS OF THE INHABITANTS.

CHAPTER I.

GEOGRAPHY AND DESCRIPTION.

UPPER California comprises in its widest sense all that large portion of country between lat. 32° and 42° N. and long. 107° and 124° W. extending from the Pacific to the River Colorado, which separates it from New Mexico. The eastern and central parts of this region are occupied by the Rocky Mountains, to the west of which lies a dry and sandy plain or desert, about 700 miles in length, with a breadth of about 100 miles at its southern, and 200 miles at its northern extremity. This plain forms the eastern boundary of the inhabited, and indeed only habitable portion of the country, which is a strip of country, about 700 miles in length, and from 100 to 150 in breadth, extending along the Pacific Ocean, and bounded by the Sierra Nevada on the east.

All this immense extent of territory, except that occupied by the missions on the coast, is possessed by scattered tribes of Indians, and has been hitherto but little known. Since, however, the Mexican country has been opened to strangers by the revolution, those plains and wilds have been traversed by adventurers from the United States: parties of hunters armed with rifles and carrying a few articles for barter have travelled from the borders of the Mississippi to the shores of the Pacific, and have astonished the Californians by their sudden appearance, and still more by the fact that they had escaped the vengeance of the wild Indians. The adventures of those American hunters furnish examples of the most extraordinary daring, and present a remarkable contrast to the conduct of the indolent native creole. The latter seldom leaves his own habitation or exposes himself to the rays of the sun; whereas these men, from their being always in the open air, and from the effect of their rough pursuits, appear nearly as wild as the beasts they are in chase of. The Spanish settlers always considered the Indians on the Rio Colorado and countries adjacent, as ferociously inimical to white men, and that it was almost impossible to pass through their territory. This is, however, a great exaggeration; for although some of the tribes may not be so docile or pusillanimous as those formerly living on the shores of the Pacific and in other parts of Mexico, yet there are none of them very formidable. Since 1845 many emigrating parties have traversed this region, some of which, during the

year 1846, were exposed to much danger and suffering, having been stopped in their progress through the mountains by terrible storms of snow and hail, imprisoned for months in these regions, and subjected to all the horrors of starvation and destitution. The accounts received from the unfortunate sufferers compose a chapter of human misery for which there are few parallels in fact or fiction. The following description of the sufferings of one party of unfortunate emigrants, which had been lost among the mountains and imprisoned in the snows, and the horrible and revolting extremities to which they were reduced to sustain life, is from the "California Star" of April 10, 1847.

"A more shocking scene cannot be imagined, than that witnessed by the party of men who went to the relief of the unfortunate emigrants in the California mountains. The bones of those who had died and been devoured by the miserable ones that still survived, were lying around their tents and cabins. Bodies of men, women, and children, with half the flesh torn from them, lay on every side. A woman sat by the side of the body of her husband, who had just died, cutting out his tongue; the heart she had already taken out, broiled, and ate! The daughter was seen eating the flesh of the father—the mother that of her children—children that of father and mother. The emaciated, wild, and ghastly appearance of the survivors added to the horror of the scene. Language cannot describe the awful change that a few weeks of dire suffering had wrought in the minds of these wretched and pitiable beings. Those who but one month before would have shuddered and sickened at the thought of eating human flesh, or of killing their companions and relatives to preserve their own lives, now looked upon the opportunity these acts afforded them of escaping the most dreadful of deaths, as a providential interference in their behalf. Calculations were coldly made, as they sat around their gloomy camp-fires, for the next and succeeding meals. Various expedients were devised to prevent the dreadful crime of murder, but they finally resolved to kill those who had the least claims to longer existence. Just at this moment, however, as if by Divine interposition, some of them died, which afforded the rest temporary relief. Some sunk into the arms of death cursing God for their miserable fate, while the last whisperings of others were prayers and songs of praise to the Almighty.

"After the first few deaths, but the one all-absorbing thought of individual self-preservation prevailed. The fountains of natural affection were dried up. The cords that once vibrated with connubial, parental, and filial affection, were rent asunder, and each one seemed resolved, without regard to the fate of others, to escape from the impending calamity. Even the wild, hostile mountain Indians, who once visited their camps, pitied them, and instead of pursuing the natural impulse of their hostile feelings to the whites, and destroying them, as they could easily have done, divided their own scanty supply of food with them.

"So changed had the emigrants become, that when the party sent out arrived with food, some of them cast it aside, and seemed to prefer the putrid human flesh that still remained. The day before the party arrived, one of the emigrants took a child of about four years of age in bed with him, and devoured the whole before morning; and the next day ate another about the same age before noon."

The country immediately behind the high lands which bound the present possessions of the missionaries, is reckoned even superior to that on the coast, and is said to consist of plains, lakes, and hills, beautifully diversified, and of the greatest natural fertility, capable of yielding every variety of vegetable productions, and abounding with timber of great size. To the northward of these plains are situated two large lakes, said to be distant from another about eighteen or twenty leagues, and their extent is described to be very great; but so little certain is known respecting them, that it would only lead to error to repeat the tales related by those who have never seen them; there is no doubt however of their existence, and that they possess many fine islands which are inhabited by Indians. The lakes and streams in this district abound with bulrushes called by the natives *Tule*, and from this the whole country takes its name, being called the plains of the *Tulares*.

The surface of the country is considerably varied in different districts, being in some places elevated into ranges of low hills, in others spreading out into extensive plains. The hills vary from one thousand to upwards of three thousand feet in height. Some seem chiefly composed of sandstone. The soil is in some places of a light sandy character, yet far from sterile; in others, of the richest loam. In some spots the surface is marshy; but the prevailing character of the soil is dryness. Indeed, the chief defect of the country is the infrequency of springs and rivers; although this infrequency is far from amounting to a serious obstacle to agriculture or even to extreme fertility. Water can be obtained in most places by digging, and the plains between the mountains and the shore are here and there intersected by small streams, on the banks of which most of the missions are founded. The largest rivers are those which run into the bay of San Francisco and arise from the north, the north-east and the south-east. The largest of these, the Sacramento, has been traced some hundred miles upward to the north-east where

it was found still a large river; it is supposed by some to flow out of a large lake, but this point remains yet unascertained: it is navigable, at least by boats, to a great distance inland. The San Joachin, also of considerable size, rises in the mountains in the south-east.

All travellers in this country have been struck with its fertility and beauty, but especially with its fertility. In many places, however, even where the vallies and plains are fertile, the hills are bleak and bare; and on the coast, in many places, as in the neighborhood of San Francisco, the sea-winds and fogs blast the foliage of all the trees in exposed situations. More inland, nothing of the kind is seen; but a succession of scenes which are indeed most delightful to the traveller, whether he has come from the arid wilds of the south, the bleak north, or from the ocean. Such scenes were not lost on Vancouver when he visited this coast. In his account of a journey from Monterey to Santa Clara, he notices many such. "We considered our route, he says, to be parallel to the sea coast; between which and our path, the ridge of mountains extended to the south-eastward; and as we advanced, their sides and summits exhibited a high degree of luxuriant fertility, interspersed with copses of various forms and magnitude, and verdant open spaces enriched with stately fruit trees of different descriptions. About noon, we arrived at a very pleasant and enchanting lawn, situated amidst a grove of trees at the foot of a small hill, by which flowed a very fine stream of excellent water. We had not proceeded far from this delightful spot, when we entered a country I little expected to find in these regions. For about twenty miles it could only be compared to a park which had originally been planted with the true old English oak; the underwood, that had probably attained its early growth, had the appearance of having been cleared away, and had left the stately lords of the forest in complete possession of the soil, which was covered with luxuriant herbage, and beautifully diversified with pleasing eminences and vallies; which, with the lofty range of mountains that bounded the prospect, required only to be adorned with the neat habitations of an industrious people, to produce a scene not inferior to the most studied effect of taste in the disposal of grounds." When it is considered that this was in November, the beauty of the scenery is not a little enhanced. "New California (says Humboldt) is as well watered and fertile as Old California is arid and stony. The climate is much more mild than in the same latitude on the eastern coast of the new Continent. The frequent fogs give vigor to vegetation, and fertilize the soil which is covered with a black and spongy earth." This last observation is only partially true, as will appear from what is stated above.

For salubrity there is no climate in the world superior to that of the coast of California. Disease is little known except on some portions of the Sacramento and San Joachin rivers, where vegetation is rank and decays in the autumn.

Here the malaria produces chills and fevers, but generally the attacks are slight, and yield easily to medicine. The atmosphere is so pure and preservative along the coast, that flesh seldom putrifies, and dead carcasses lie exposed even in midsummer to the sun and weather for months without emitting any offensive smell. It is rarely so cold in the settled portion of the country as to congeal water, and the thermometer at any season of the year seldom sinks below 50° or rises above 80°. In certain positions on the coast, and especially at San Francisco, the winds rise diurnally, and blowing fresh upon the shore render the temperature cool in midsummer. In the winter the wind blows from the land, and the temperature at these points is warmer.

The southern parts of the country are not entirely exempt from the periodical rains and long droughts to which the tropical climates in their vicinity are liable. For this reason irrigation of the land sown with wheat becomes necessary there. In the northern districts, however, and particularly around the bay of San Francisco, the rains are more general and irrigation unnecessary. The periodical rains of the south, which are very heavy, begin to fall in November and continue till April; being the reverse of what takes place on the Mexican continent, where the rains commence in June and end in November. From Monterey northward, a thick fog commences on the cessation of the rains, and continues till the month of August. During this period the fog prevails almost daily in the morning; but during the rest of the year, the sky is beautifully clear and serene.

CHAPTER II.

EARLY HISTORY AND SETTLEMENT.

It was during the month of November, 1602, the sun just retiring behind the distant highland which forms the background of a spacious harbor at the southernmost point of Alta California, that a small fleet of vessels might have been seen directing their course as if in search of a place of anchorage; their light sails drawn up, while the larger ones swelling now and then to the action of the breeze, bore them majestically along, forcing their way through the immense and almost impenetrable barrier of sea-weed to a haven, which at the remote period stated was considered the unexplored region of the North. The fleet referred to, hauled their wind to the shore, and passing a bluff point of land on their left, soon came to anchor; but not until the shades of night had cast a gloom over the scene so recently lighted up with the gorgeous rays of a setting sun.

This was the commencement, or rather preliminary mark of civilization in this country, by the Spaniards, (if so it can be called,) and on the following morning a detachment was landed, accompanied by a friar, to make careful investigation of the long ridge of highland which serves as a protection to the harbor from the

heavy northwest gales. They found, as reported, an abundance of small oak and other trees, together with a great variety of useful and aromatic herbs; and from its summit they beheld the extent and beauty of the port, reaching as they said full three leagues from where the vessel lay at anchor. A large tent was erected on the sandy beach to answer the purposes of a church, where the friar might perform mass, and by directions of the commanding officers, the boats were drawn up for repairing, wells were dug, parties were sent off to cut wood, while guards were placed at convenient distances to give notice of the approach of any hostile force. The latter precaution was hardly carried into effect, ere a large body of naked Indians were seen moving along the shore, armed with bows and arrows. A friar, protected by six soldiers, was dispatched to meet them, who, making signs of peace by exhibiting a white flag and throwing handfuls of sand high into the air, influenced them to lay aside their arms, when affectionately embracing them, the good old friar distributed presents of beads and necklaces, with which they eagerly adorned their persons. This manifestation of good feeling induced them to draw near to where the commander had landed with his men, but perceiving so large a number, they retreated to a neighboring knoll, and from thence sent forward to the Spaniards ten aged females, who, possessing apparently so much affability, were presented immediately with gifts and instructed to go and inform their people of the friendly disposition cherished for them by the white strangers. This was sufficient to implant a free intercourse with the Indians, who daily visited the Spaniards and bartered off their skins and furs in exchange for bread and trinkets. But at length the time arrived for the fleet to depart, and they proceeded northward, visiting in their course Monterey and Mendocino, where the same favorable result attended the enterprise as at other places, and they returned in safety to New Spain.

So successful had been the character of this expedition throughout the entire period of its execution, that an enthusiasm prevailed in the minds of the Spaniards, which could only be assuaged by an attempt to conquer and Christianize the inhabitants of that distant portion of the American continent. Many were the fruitless results of the Spanish adventurer—numerous were the statements of his toil and labor, till at length a formidable attempt, under the patronage and direction of Don Gaspar de Portala and Father Junipero Serra, successfully achieved the desired object for which it was planned and executed.

At San Diego, where, a century and a half before, the primitive navigators under Cortez communed with the rude and unsophisticated native—there, where the zealous devotee erected his altar on the burning sand, and with offerings of incense and prayer hallowed it to God, as the birth-place of Christianity in that region—upon that sainted spot commenced the spiritual conquest, the cross was erected, and the holy missionaries who accompanied the expedi-

tion entered heart and soul upon their religious duties. Successful in all they undertook, their first establishment in a short time was completed, and drawing around it the converted Indians in large numbers, the rude and uncultivated fields gave place to agricultural improvement—the arts and sciences gradually obtained foundation where before all was darkness, and day after day hundreds were added to the folds of the holy and apostolic church. Thus triumphantly proceeded the labors of the Spanish conquerors! In course of time other institutions were founded at Santa Barbara, Monterey, and San Francisco, where at each place a military fortress was erected, which served for their protection, and to keep in check such of the natives who were disinclined to observe the regulations of the community.

The natives formed an ardent and almost adorable attachment for their spiritual fathers, and were happy, quite happy, under their jurisdiction. Ever ready to obey them, the labor in the field and workshop met with ready compliance, and so prosperous were the institutions that many of them became wealthy, in the increase of their cattle and great abundance of their granaries. It was no unusual sight to behold the plains for leagues literally spotted with bullocks, and large fields of corn and wheat covering acres of ground. This state of things continued until the period when Mexico underwent a change in its political form of government, which so disheartened the feelings of the loyal missionaries, that they became regardless of their establishments, and suffered them to decline for want of attention to their interests. At length, civil discord and anarchy among the Californians prepared a more effective measure for their destruction, and they were left to the superintendence of individuals who plundered them of all that was desirable or capable of removal. Thus, the government commenced the robbery, and its hirelings carried it out to the letter, destroying and laying waste wherever they were placed. In order to give the inhabitants a share of the spoils, some of them were permitted to slaughter the cattle by contract, which was an equal division of the proceeds, and the contractors were careful when they delivered one hide to a mission, to reserve *two* for themselves, in this way following up the example of their superiors.

This important revolution in the systematic order of the monastic institutions took place in 1836, at which period the most important of them possessed property, exclusive of their lands and tenements, to the value of two hundred and fifty thousand dollars. At the present day they have but a little more than dilapidated walls and restricted boundaries of territory. Notwithstanding this wanton devastation of property, contrary to the opinion of many who were strongly in favor of supporting these religious institutions, the result proved beneficial to the country at large. Individual enterprise succeeded as the lands became distributed, so that the Californian beheld himself no longer dependent on the bounty of his spiritual directors,

but, on the contrary, he was enabled to give support to them, from the increase and abundance of his own possessions.

CHAPTER III.

CONQUEST BY THE UNITED STATES.

The population of California, in the spring of 1846, was estimated at 10,000, exclusive of Indians. Two thousand of these were supposed to be foreigners, chiefly from the United States. The latter class had been rapidly increasing for several years; and it became apparent to the more intelligent of the Californians, that this population, if suffered to increase in the same ratio, would, in a few years, change the government and institutions of the country.

In 1845 a revolutionary movement, headed by Don José Castro, Alvarado, Pio Pico, and others, in which the foreigners participated, resulted in deposing Gen. Micheltorena, governor of California under the appointment of the government of Mexico. After the deposition of Micheltorena, the gubernatorial office was assumed by Pico. Gen. Castro, at the same time, assumed the command of the military. Gen. Castro, soon after he came into power, adopted a policy towards the foreigners highly offensive. Among his acts was the promulgation of a proclamation, requiring all Americans to leave the country. This was its *interpretation* by the latter. No immediate steps were taken to enforce this order, and but little attention was paid to it by those to whom it was addressed. Their intention from the first, however, was, doubtless, to resist any force that should attempt their expulsion from the country.

About the 1st of June, 1846, an order was issued by Gen. Castro to Lieut. Francisco de Arcé, commandant of the garrison at Sonoma, to remove a number of horses, the property of the government, from the Mission of San Rafael, to his headquarters, then at Santa Clara. This officer was accompanied by a guard of fourteen men. In the execution of the order, he was compelled to cross the Sacramento river at New Helvetia, the nearest point at which the horses could swim the stream. While travelling in that direction, he was seen by an Indian, who reported to the American settlers on the Sacramento, that he had seen two or three hundred armed men advancing up the Sacramento valley. At this time Captain Fremont, with his exploring party, was encamped near the confluence of the Rio de las Plumas and the Sacramento. This officer had previously had some difficulties with Gen. Castro, and the inference from the information given by the Indian was, that Castro, at the head of a considerable force, was marching to attack Captain Fremont. The alarm was spread throughout the valley with as great celerity as the swiftest horses could convey it, and most of the settlers joined Captain Fremont at his camp, to assist in his defence against the supposed meditated attack of Castro. They were met here, however, by a person (Mr

Knight) who stated that he had seen the party of Californians in charge of the horses, and conversed with the officer commanding it. Mr. Knight stated that the officer told him, that Gen. Castro had sent for the horses for the purpose of mounting a battalion of 200 men, with which he designed to march against the Americans settled in the Sacramento valley, and to expel them from the country. This being accomplished, he intended to fortify the Bear River Pass in the California mountains, and prevent the ingress of the emigrants from the United States to California. The recent proclamations of Castro gave strong probability to this report, and the American settlers determined at once to take measures for their own protection.

After some consultation, it was resolved that a force of sufficient strength for the purpose should pursue the Californians, and capture the horses. This measure would weaken Castro, and for the present frustrate his supposed designs. Twelve men immediately volunteered for the expedition, and Mr. Merritt, being the eldest of the party, was chosen captain. At daylight on the morning of the 10th of June, they surprised the party of Californians under the command of Lieut. De Arcé, who, without resistance, gave up their arms and the government horses. An individual travelling with this party claimed six horses as belonging to himself, which he was allowed to take and depart with, the leader of the Americans declaring that they would not seize upon or disturb private property.

The Californians, after they had delivered their arms and horses, were dismissed with a horse for each to ride, and a message to Gen. Castro, that if he wished his horses again *he must come and get them*. The revolutionary movement on the part of the American foreigners was now fairly commenced, and it became necessary, in self-defence, for them to prosecute what they had begun, with vigor. The party being increased to thirty-three men, still under the command of Mr. Merritt, marched directly to Sonoma, and on the morning of the 14th of June captured and took possession of that town and military post.

From this place a proclamation was published by the commander of the garrison, setting forth the objects for which the party had gathered, and the principles which would be adhered to in the event of their success. They acknowledged their intention to overthrow the then existing military despotism, and to establish and perpetuate a republican form of government.

Some attempts were made to dislodge the Americans from Sonoma, but without success, and in a sortie made by the garrison, consisting of only twenty-two men, a party of the Californians, eighty-six strong, were utterly routed and defeated. Several days were spent in active pursuit of the enemy, but they succeeded in crossing the Bay of San Francisco before they could be overtaken. With this retreat all opposition in this quarter of the country was ended.

Commodore Sloat arrived at Monterey in the U. S. Frigate Savannah on the 2d of July. He had heard at Mazatlan of the first difficul-

ties between the Mexican and the United States forces on the Rio Grande, but had not heard that of the declaration of Congress that war existed. He determined at once to take possession of the country, and on the 7th of July the American flag was raised at Monterey, amidst the cheers of troops and foreigners present, and a salute of twenty-one guns from the vessels in the harbor. Here he issued his proclamation to the inhabitants, and despatched orders to the sloop of war Portsmouth, then lying at San Francisco, to take possession of that place, which was accordingly done on the 8th of July.

On the tenth, a flag dispatched to Sonoma was received and raised there with shouts of satisfaction from the revolutionary garrison. The United States flag was soon after unfurled without serious opposition, at every principal place in the northern part of California.

At the south, however, the American forces met with more resistance. The town of Los Angeles, in which Gen. Castro had concentrated his troops, numbering 600 men, was taken without resistance, on the 13th of August by Commodore Stockton, and Castro fled with his forces to Sonoma. But about the 1st of October an insurrection broke out in the town, and a large body of Californians advancing upon the place at the same time, the garrison capitulated and left it in possession of the insurgents.

On the receipt of this intelligence at Monterey, a party of volunteers was sent out by Com. Stockton, which met with Gen. Kearney, and a portion of his command, about 100 Dragoons, which had crossed the country from Sauto Fe. Uniting their forces, they approached the enemy on the morning of the 6th of December, and a furious charge being made on them by the dragoons, they gave way after some slight resistance, keeping up however a continued fire upon the Americans. Upon the retreat of the enemy a portion of the dragoons led off rapidly in pursuit, and became separated from the main body of the troops. The enemy seeing their advantage rallied their whole force, charged with their lances, and on account of their greatly superior numbers did severe execution to the front ranks of the Americans, who, however, being soon reinforced by the remainder of their forces, again drove them from the field, which they occupied and encamped upon.

On the 11th of December, the party of marines and sailors sent out from San Diego, joined the American forces, and they proceeded on their route without seeing the enemy till the 8th of January, 1847, when they showed themselves in full force of 600 mounted men, with four pieces of artillery, under Gov. Flores, occupying the heights which commanded the river San Gabriel, and ready to dispute its passage. The troops under Gen. Kearney immediately forded the river, carried the heights, and drove the enemy from them after an action of an hour and a half, during which the enemy made a charge on their left flank, which was repulsed; they soon retreated, leaving the Americans in possession of the field.

The next day they proceeded on their march, and on reaching the plains of Mesa, the enemy's artillery again opened on them, and after occasional skirmishes for about two hours, the Californians concentrated their force, and made another charge on the left flank, which was quickly repulsed. Shortly after this they retired, and the Americans continuing their march encamped in the afternoon on the banks of the Mesa, three miles below the town of Los Angeles, which they entered the following morning without further molestation.

These two actions were the most considerable that occurred during the conquest of the country, and after they were decided, the whole body of the enemy capitulated, leaving the United States in undisputed possession. During the following March and April, the regiment of volunteers arrived from New-York, bringing with them a large quantity of munitions, stores, tools, saw-mills, grist-mills, &c., to be employed in the fortification of the principal harbors on the coast, San Francisco, Monterey and San Diego, and to supply the wants of the inhabitants. Since this time the country has been quiet, and no opposition has been manifested to the government of the United States, which has been secured in its possession by the recent treaty with Mexico.

CHAPTER IV.

STATE OF AGRICULTURE.

The lands of California, as has been stated, have until within a few years been almost exclusively in the hands of the missionaries, and consequently its agricultural operations were for a long time chiefly carried on by them. This art or science is well known not to be even now in a very advanced state in Spain, and could not possibly have been well understood—even in its then state—by the monks who first settled in California in the last century. The actual state of agriculture in this country—which has not in any degree improved since its first introduction—may, consequently, easily be imagined to be most rude and backward. It is not thought necessary by those primitive farmers to study the use of fallows or green crops; nor to study the alteration of white and leguminous grains, or any such modes of improved husbandry: these are refinements they never heard or dreamed of, and it would be as reasonable to expect, that they should adopt such novelties, as that they would the doctrines of Luther or Calvin. Their only plan of renovating the fertility of an exhausted soil, is to let it rest from culture, and to abandon it to its native weeds until it may again be thought capable of bearing crops of grain. From the superabundance of land in the country, a second cultivation of exhausted ground is not resorted to for many years, and perhaps not at all.

The grains chiefly cultivated are maize or Indian corn; wheat; barley; and a kind of small bean called *frijol*: this bean is in universal use all over Spanish America, and is a

most pleasant food. They are cooked, when in a ripe state, fried with lard, and much esteemed by all ranks of people.

Maize is the staple bread corn and is cultivated in rows or drills. The cultivation of this grain is better managed than that of the others, and is certainly superior to what might be expected from such rude farmers and with such implements of husbandry as they possess. The plough used, not only in California, but in all other parts of America inhabited by the Spanish race, is of great antiquity. It is composed of two principal pieces, the one which we shall call the main piece, is formed out of a crooked branch of timber cut from the tree, of such a natural shape as to form this main piece, which constitutes of itself the sole and handle or stilt; it has only one handle, and no mould-board or other contrivance for turning over the furrow, and is therefore only capable of making a simple rut equal on both sides: a share is fitted to the point of the sole, but without any feather, and is the only iron in the whole construction of the plough. The other piece is the beam, which is of great length so as to reach the yoke of the oxen by which the plough is drawn; this beam is also formed of a natural piece of wood, cut from a tree of the necessary dimensions, and has no dressing except the taking off the bark: it is inserted into the upper part of the main piece, and connected with it by a small upright piece of wood on which it slides, and is fixed by two wedges: by withdrawing those wedges the beam is elevated or lowered, and by this means the plough is regulated as to depth of furrow, or what ploughmen call, giving more or less earth.

The long beam passes between the two oxen like the pole of a carriage or ox-wain, and no chain is required for drawing the plough: a pin is put through the point of the beam which passes before the yoke, and is fixed thereto by thongs of raw hide. The ploughman goes at one side of the plough holding the handle or stilt with his right hand, and managing the goad with his left. There are never more than two oxen used in these ploughs, and no driver is required; the ploughman managing the plough and directing the oxen himself. The manner of yoking the oxen is not as is done in the north of Europe, by putting the yoke on the shoulders and fixing it by a wooden collar or bow, round the neck: the yoke is placed on the top of the head close behind the horns, tied firmly to their roots and to the forehead by thongs, so that instead of drawing by the shoulders they draw by the roots of the horns and forehead. When oxen are so bound up they have no freedom to move their heads; they go with their noses turned up, and seem to be under great pain.

Their carts are drawn by oxen yoked in the same manner; and in this case, they have to bear the weight of the load on the top of their heads, which is certainly the most disadvantageous mechanical point of the whole body: this renders their sufferings more severe than in the plough, and it is truly distressing to see the poor

animals writhing under a load which on their backs or shoulders, they could easily support. The form of the ox-cart is as rude as that of the plough; it is composed of a bottom frame of a most clumsy construction, on which is raised a body of a few bars stuck upright, of a great height, and connected at the top with other slight bars; this cart is usually without lining, but when used for carrying maize, it is lined with caues tied to the upright bars. The pole is of very large dimensions, and long enough to be fastened to the yoke in the same manner as the beam of the plough. This also adds greatly to the distress of the poor oxen, because, the pole being tied fast to the yoke which rests on their heads, they feel every jerk and twist of the cart in the most sensible manner; and when the road is full of stones, sloughs, and all manner of obstructions, as it generally is in America, it appears as if the animal's head would every moment be twisted off!

The wheels of the Californian ox-cart, as well as those of the other Spanish Americas, are of a most singular construction. They have no spokes, and are composed of only three pieces of timber. The middle piece is hewn out of a huge tree, of a sufficient size to form the nave and middle of the wheel all in one: this middle piece is made of a length equal to the diameter of the wheel, and rounded at the two ends to arcs of the circumference. The other two pieces are made of timber naturally bent and joined to the sides of the middle piece by keys or oblong pieces of wood, groved into the ends of the pieces which form the wheel: the whole is then made circular. There does not enter into the construction of this cart a particle of iron, not even a nail, for the axle is entirely of wood, and the linch-pin of the same material, as well as the pins that fix the cart to the axle.

From the construction of the plough, as already described, it will be perceived, that there being no mould board or feathered shear, the furrow cannot be cut up and turned over as with an English plough, a rut only being made; consequently the soil can only be broken by successively crossing and recrossing the field many times; and it is evident that however often crossed by a machine of this kind, the root weeds of any tenacity can never be cut, so that this mode of ploughing must always be very imperfect; and although four or five crossings are often given, yet the soil is not sufficiently broken or the weeds eradicated.

The necessity of giving so many crossings is a great waste of labor; and as the ploughing is deferred till the commencement of the rains, and very near the time of sowing, an immense number of ploughs must be employed; it is no uncommon thing to see on the large maize estates in some parts of Mexico, upwards of one hundred ploughs at work together! With these ploughs it is not necessary to divide the field into ridges or brakes. As they are equal on both sides they have only to begin at one side of the field and follow one another up and down, as

many as can be employed together without interfering in turning round at the end, which they do, in succession, like ships tacking in a line of battle, and so proceed down the same side as they came up.

A harrow is totally unknown, and where wheat or barley is sown a bush is generally used to cover in the seed; but in some places, instead of this, a long heavy leg of wood is drawn over the field something on the plan of a roller, but dragging without turning round, so as to carry a portion of the soil over the seed.

In the cultivation of maize, when the field is sufficiently ploughed or crossed, a rut or furrow is made by the plough at the distance intended for the drills, which is generally five or six feet. In this rut the seed is deposited by hand, the labourers carrying it in small baskets, out of which they take a handful and drop from three to five grains at once, which they slightly cover with their foot from the loose earth on the side of the rut; and so proceed depositing a like number of seeds at the distance of about three feet. In this state the seed is left to spring up to a moderate height, and then the ploughs are again put to turn a furrow on each side of the rut towards the young plants, thus forming a drill. When the maize grows up to a considerable height, it is commonly cleaned by hand, by pulling up the weeds; the middle between the drills, is again turned up by the plough passing up and down, and the labour is then finished.

The sowing of maize as well as of other grains in Upper California, commences in November, or as near the commencement of the rains as possible, and the harvest is in the months of July and August.

The process of harvesting maize is as follows. The labourer carries with him a large and very deep basket of wicker work, with which he proceeds along the drills and fills it with the heads of maize; when full he carries it on his back to the end of the field where an ox-cart is stationed, and into which he empties his basket; when the cart is full it proceeds to the place of deposit. In this way the stalks are all left; and when all their heads are gathered the cattle are then turned into the field and eat up the leaves and such part of the stalks as are eatable; these are found to be very nutritious; and the cattle get fat at this season more than on the best grass pastures.

The next operation is to separate the maize from the head or husk. This is done by rubbing the full head against a few empty husks bound together, and is a very tedious operation. Maize in warm countries is very liable to spoil; and to be infested by an insect called in Spanish *gorgoja*; and as it is found that maize keeps longer in the husk, it is sometimes left so till it is required for use; but although it may be kept somewhat longer in this state than when separated, yet it is also soon subject to the attack of this insect. On the coast of the tropical country of Mexico, it is difficult to keep maize above six or eight months, but in California it can be kept for a much longer time. Perhaps by kiln-drying and other methods, maize might be pre-

served even in tropical climates for a great length of time.

The produce of maize, in proportion to the seed, is perhaps more than that of any other grain whatever; but this doubtless chiefly arises from its being always planted in drills, and I am not certain if wheat and other grains might not give equal returns if planted or dibbled in the same way. The return from maize in good land is often as high as a hundred and fifty fold, and even higher, and if it is much under a hundred it is thought to be an inferior crop.

Wheat is sown "in broad-cast" on land prepared as for maize. In the south of California, owing to the length of the dry season, it is cultivated by irrigation; but in the north, and particularly round the bay of San Francisco, as formerly stated, the rains and dews are sufficient, and irrigation is not necessary. From the lands being new, and naturally fertile, the produce of wheat ought to be very great; and from the excellence of the climate the quality of the grain should be very fine. At present from the unskilfulness of the culture, and the inattention to procure good seed, neither the quantity nor quality is equal to what they ought to be. The cultivation of wheat is at present but very limited, although from the excellence of the soil and climate, and the abundance of land fit for the production of this grain, Upper California ought to be—and one day must be—the granary of all South America

CHAPTER V.

PRODUCTIONS AND LIVE STOCK OF THE COUNTRY.

That most useful plant, the potatoe, thrives well in California, but the people in this as in every other Spanish country, do not make this root a staple article of subsistence, nor is it used as a substitute for bread. When potatoe are brought to the table in Spanish countries they are made up into a dish to be eaten alone: they are however now much more cultivated than before the introduction of strangers, who use them as with us, and who will, in time, show the inhabitants their value.

Of green vegetables for the table, the peasantry and all those who live in the country, make little or no use. It is a remarkable fact, that in all parts of Spanish America no such things are to be seen in the gardens of the peasants, nor even in those of the proprietors of estates, as cabbages or greens of any kind: only in the vicinity of large towns are to be found cabbage gardens. In California it may be said that before the admission of foreign settlers, neither the potatoe nor green vegetables were cultivated as articles of food. No such thing as the cultivation of turnips in the large way, or for the food of cattle, is at all known. They have a small white kind for the table, but its flavor is insipid, and as well as other green vegetables is but little used.

The cultivation of hemp was formerly carried to some considerable extent, and furnished a supply of this article to the arsenal of San

Blas: its produce was abundant and of very excellent quality. Its cultivation, however, was discontinued soon after the withdrawing of the Spanish squadron from San Blas, and has not again been renewed; but in the hands of industrious settlers this undoubtedly would be a source of great profit. Flax has also been tried, and proves congenial to the soil and climate; but from the total want of machinery for dressing it, and industry to manufacture it, nothing has been done except merely by way of trial.

The vine thrives in California in an extraordinary degree. It is cultivated already to a very considerable degree, and might be extended almost without limits: wine is now made of tolerably good quality, and some even very excellent. Nothing is wanting but intelligent persons, to make wine of superior quality, and which would find a ready market in Mexico and the neighbouring countries where the vine does not grow.

The quantity of wine and brandy consumed in those countries is immense; all of which could be supplied from California at a price infinitely less than what is now paid for that brought from Europe. Raisins also, the produce of the vine, are articles of considerable consumption, so that this branch of industry would be a source of great riches to an enterprising and industrious people, but at present, instead of exporting either wine or brandy, they have to purchase them for their own use.

The olive is also produced in very great perfection; and when well prepared is not inferior to that of France; and the oil would be equally good if expressed and preserved with care. These are articles of great consumption among a Spanish population, and would be of much importance as exports to the neighbouring republics.

The Botany and Flora of California are rich, and will hereafter form a fruitful field of discovery to the naturalist. There are numerous plants reported to possess extraordinary medical virtues. The "Soap-plant," (*amole*), is one which appears to be among the most serviceable. The root, which is the saponaceous portion of the plant, resembles the Onion, but possesses the quality of cleansing equal to any manufactured by the soap-boiler.

There is another plant in high estimation with the Californians, called CANCHALAGUA, which is held by them as an antidote for all the diseases to which they are subject; but in particular for cases of Fever and Ague. For purifying the blood, regulating the system, and strengthening the system in cases of debility, it surpasses all the medicinal herbs that have been brought into notice, and it must become in time one of the most important articles in the practice of medicine. In the season for flowers, which is generally during the months of May and June, its pretty pink-colored blossoms form a conspicuous display in the great variety which adorn the fields of California.

Amongst the many useful herbs whose medicinal virtues have been discovered by the natives, one in particular they hold in high esteem, since it is by them considered a specific

for the poisonous bite of the rattlesnake. Its peculiar virtues were discovered not long since by an Indian, who seems to have placed the most implicit faith in its power, for he submitted himself to be bitten by a snake upon the arm. His limbs immediately swelled to an extraordinary size, and the poor native seemed just ready to expire, when taking a small quantity of the herb in his mouth and chowing it, he spat upon the wound, and rubbing this into it with his hand, in a short time entirely recovered. The Indians say, that should any venomous reptile eat of the plant, its death would be instantaneous.

Pasturage is the principal object pursued in California as well as in all the Spanish settlements of America. The immense tracts of country possessed by them in proportion to the population, added to the indolent and unenterprising habits of this race of men, renders the pastoral state the most congenial to their situation and disposition. Few men and little labour are required to take care of herds of cattle, which naturally increase rapidly in the vast plains abounding with rich pastures; whereas, to raise grain, great labour and a numerous population are required. The pastures of Upper California are most abundant, and the domestic animals have increased amazingly.

There is in all the cattle estates a time set apart, at certain seasons of the year, for the purpose of collecting the cattle in order to overlook and count them; and to brand the young ones with the mark of the estate, and perform certain other operations, as well as to accustom them to take the fold, and prevent them from running wild. This is called a *rodeo* and is a holiday-time to all the inhabitants of the estate and its vicinity. Numbers come from great distances to assist gratuitously at the fête. On this occasion the cattle are driven into a large ring fold at a wide opening on one side: this is afterwards all closed up except a small door left for the cattle to be forced out at. Those that are to be operated upon are made to escape at this door singly; and when a bull finds himself in the open field, he makes off with the utmost speed, pursued by a space of horsemen swinging their lasos in the air; and while in full chase and when they get within point blank, those foremost throw their lasos, some round the horns, others round the neck; some entrap a hind leg, others a fore one: they then stop short their well-trained horses, and the bull falls as if shot, tumbling heels over head. In a moment he is secured by tying the lasos round his legs, and by some of the people lying down on his head. In this state the wildest bull lies perfectly motionless, and suffers whatever operation has to be performed, almost without making an effort at resistance.

Early and constant practice can only enable one to acquire such dexterity; and, indeed, the practice of the *Lasores* begins from their earliest infancy. The first thing you see in a little urchin's hand is a laso of thread or twine with which he essays to ensnare his mother's kittens and chickens, and perhaps from those elemental

essays the theory of the laso can only be comprehended: for the rapidity and magical-like effect with which the real laso is thrown, leaves no time or opportunity to see how it acts. It appears that to secure the hind leg, the large noose of the laso,—which, by swinging it round the head, is formed into a circle,—is thrown so as to pass under the leg at the very moment when this is elevated in making the spring, while the bull is galloping, and placed exactly where the leg must fall on coming to the ground: when the laso is thus thrown, and the leg placed within the circle of its noose, the thrower instantly checks his horse, and gives his laso a jerk in the very instant of time when the bull's foot touches the ground, and thus draws the noose up and tight round the leg. To catch the animal by the horns or neck is easily understood, and does not require so much skill; yet even to do this with certainty to a bull at full speed, and on a horse in chase, requires much practice and dexterity. The saddles used are well fitted to the exercise: they rise high before and behind, and have a knob on the fore part on which the riders can lay hold to secure themselves, and on which they can make fast or wind up the laso, the end of which however is not tied to this knob, but to a ring in the girth of the saddle. The horses are so taught as to lean over when checked, against the direction in which the bull draws, and thereby secure themselves from falling down under the sudden tug occasioned by the impetus of the animal when it is brought up by the laso. The bridle used is equally well adapted to the purpose, being most powerful in its structure and calculated for suddenly checking a horse. It is a single curb of a peculiar construction, having the bit doubled up high in the mouth without a joint; and instead of a curb chain, it has a solid ring of iron which passes through the upper part of the doubled-up bit within the mouth, and then passes behind the lower jaw, thus forming a most tremendous lever sufficient to break the horse's jaw if powerfully applied. The use of this makes the horse's mouth so sensible, and gives the rider such complete power over him, that he is checked at full speed in the most instantaneous manner. It is a common practice in some parts of Spanish America for the people in exercising their horses to ride up full speed at a wall, and when the horse's head is within a few inches of it to check them all at once: this masterly mode of management of their horses can alone enable them to use the laso with such dexterity as they do.

Little milk is used by the Spanish race in America, and when they do use it they have a very awkward way of taking it from the cow. They think it is absolutely necessary to use the calf to induce the cow to give her milk; for this reason, they first let the calf suck for some time alone, and then lay hold of one of the teats while the calf is still sucking the others, and so by a kind of stealth procure a portion only of the milk. They have no idea that a cow would give milk at all if the calf was altogether taken away from her; so that when cows are kept

for their milk, the calves must be kept along with them, and as they get the best share, a great number of cows and calves must be kept to produce a small quantity of milk.

The number of sheep in all Upper California is only one hundred and fifty three thousand odd, which might be increased almost without limits; but as their wool is of a quality unfit for exportation, and mutton little used for food, there is no encouragement at present for any attention being paid to their propagation.

It is impossible to conceive a country more adapted to the breeding of sheep than Upper California; and if a good kind were introduced by intelligent breeders the benefit would be incalculable.

Swine do not seem to be very much attended to in California, but in other parts of Mexico they are bred in great numbers. They are reared and fed chiefly for their lard, and are of a very good kind derived from the Chinese breed. They are fed in a manner so as to produce as much fat and as little flesh as possible. They are allowed to grow to a certain age in a lean state, subsisting chiefly on such roots and herbs as they can procure at large in the woods and fields, and when they arrive at the proper age and size for killing they are then shut up, or at least kept at home, and as much maize given them as they can eat; this being administered to them in moderate quantities, at a time, so as not to surfeit them. By this means they soon get enormously fat, and when slaughtered they are found to be almost all lard to the very bones. This lard they peel off as blubber is peeled off from a whale, the whole being entirely separated from every part of the flesh and entrails, leaving an astonishingly small proportion of flesh. They are often so highly fed as to be unable to move. In the sale and purchase of these animals their weight of flesh is never taken into account; the calculation is how many pounds of lard they will produce. Lard with all ranks is a necessary of life. Perhaps in the whole range of their cookery—which is sufficiently ample—no dish is done without hog's lard; from the *sopa* to the *frijoles* all have a large proportion of it in their composition; even their bread, to eat with the indispensable *Chocolate*, has its proportion of lard; and although they delight in seeing every dish swimming in their favourite fat, yet butter in any dish, or used in any way as sauce, is abhorred as much by a Spanish American, as by an Englishman is the train oil of a Russian boor.

CHAPTER VI.

CONCLUSION.

The writer, in the preceding chapters, has given a correct and impartial account of the peculiar character of California and its inhabitants. A portion of the country, however, most interesting in its natural features, has been, perhaps, but too little dwelt upon; it is that, embracing the extensive Bay of St. Francisco, into which flow the waters from the Sacramento, San Joa-

quin, Jesus Maria, and other lesser streams. The surrounding country, diversified by hills and plains, is very beautiful; the soil is rich and heavily timbered; and the high mountains which rise around are thickly adorned with cedar trees. There are extensive prairies also; and large tracts of excellent tillage ground on the banks of the rivers. It is the grand region for colonization; and if peopled by our industrious backwoods-men, who are gradually emigrating from the Western States, it must hold, in a very few years, a conspicuous station among the nations of the earth. Its locations are well adapted to purposes of agriculture, and such is its mildness of climate, that all the tropical fruits might be raised there, if cultivated. The large rivers are navigable for steamboats, for more than one hundred miles, and well stocked with salmon and other fish. The cold, blustering winds, and disagreeable temperature of the climate, alluded to by other writers, are solely confined to the lands adjacent to the seacoast; for, a very few leagues beyond the limits of "Yerba Buena," we find a totally different atmosphere.

There is a vast extent of land, however, beyond the mountains, which is but imperfectly known to the Californians. This has been repeatedly visited by foreigners, who have said much in its favor. It is unoccupied, and is the only part of California, with the exception of land north and east of San Francisco, that is attainable, for the purpose of colonization. All that portion that is within twenty or thirty miles of the seacoast, is, at present, either occupied by cattle farms, or by the much restricted possessions of the missions.

Gold and silver mines have been found in Upper California, from which, considerable quantities of ore have been obtained: skilful miners are only required, to make them profitable. It is said that coal has recently been discovered; which, if true, will greatly facilitate the introduction of steam navigation in the Pacific, and be the means of making California one of the most important commercial positions on the west coast of America; particularly, if ever a communication should be opened by means of a canal across the Isthmus of Panama. That such an event may transpire, is not improbable; the day is not far distant, perhaps, when it will be realized, and one may visit this fertile and interesting country, and return to the United States, in one half of the time now required for the long and tedious outward navigation. The resources of California, its magnificent harbors, climate, and abundance of naval stores, would make it the rendezvous for all the steamers engaged in the trade, between Europe and the East Indies, as well as those from the United States; and the facilities for emigration would be such, that soon the whole western coast of North America would be settled by emigrants, both from this country and Europe.

Our limits have not allowed us to give a very detailed account of California, but we would refer those who are anxious to learn further in regard to that country to the very interesting work by Mr. Bryant, entitled, "What I saw in California," to which we have been somewhat indebted in the preceding pages.

Canchalagua of California.

In offering to the public an Extract from this invaluable Plant, which has recently been introduced extensively into this country by me; I deem it necessary to enter into some explanation as to the manner in which its singular medicinal qualities became known to me, and to state my own experience of its efficacy, as also to annex to the same such testimonials as may tend to inspire confidence and promote a knowledge of its pre-eminent virtues.

I wish it to be understood, with all due respect to the medical profession, that I am neither a **PHYSICIAN** or an **APOTHECARY**. And I suppose that it will be as well for me to state how it is that I, as a **MERCHANT**, am intermeddling in medicinal preparations, and venturing to recommend them. It is singular, but when the circumstances of the case are taken into consideration, will be deemed not unnatural; they are briefly these. For more than three years I was afflicted with the **Neuralgia**; even now I shudder at the bare recollection of those days of acute anguish, and those nights of misery in which pain did "murder sleep." I was completely prostrated—unable to attend to my business—with enfeebled energies and infirm health I felt that I was daily becoming a burthen upon the world, and that life was becoming burthensome to myself. Everything that sympathy in my sufferings held out as a remedy was tried without avail; until at last, a friend arrived from California, who had been a resident there for more than fifteen years. Witnessing my most excruciating torture, and commiserating the same, he was extremely anxious to have me try the **CANCHALAGUA**, which he was confident would cure me. Fortunately he had brought home some of the plant for his own use, with which he offered to supply me. I was induced, by his earnestness, to take it; the effect was truly wonderful. In less than a week I was sensible of a great change in my nervous system, and in less than a month "Richard was himself again." Since which I have had no relapse, as I constantly keep a supply on hand, to which I eagerly resort if I have the least symptom of the approach of this dreaded disease. My intimate friends and numerous acquaintance in this city, as well as in Boston and Philadelphia, who have so long commiserated my sufferings, and who are now daily congratulating me on my restoration to health, will readily admit that a motive of philanthropy would have been a sufficient inducement to its introduction into this country, apart from pecuniary advantages. The invaluable properties of the plant have been long known in Boston, where the trade with California has been engrossed; and without ceasing to wonder that some one did not take steps towards its introduction extensively, I began to wonder why I did not take hold of it myself. At last I concluded to do so, and made the necessary arrangements with my friends in California for a constant supply, from which I have prepared the Extract, under the superintendence and ad-

vice of some of our most experienced and respectable physicians and chemists; and in offering it to the public, I do so in the most implicit confidence in its medicinal virtues. Wishing that many others may derive similar benefits with myself in the use thereof, with the recommendation to **TRY IT FOR YOUR OWN SAKES**.

I will venture to add a few remarks such as the limited space will allow, preparatory to the introduction of testimonials, the character of which will be sufficient to establish its reputation.

The operation of the **Canchalagua** upon the system in the cure of scrofulous diseases seems from its diversity to require some few remarks.

Sometimes, its only perceptible effect is upon the bowels, carrying off the vicious humors by its cathartic action; but this occurs only under the influence of too frequent or too copious doses. At other times remaining in the system, it serves to assist nature, in discharging through the pores to the surface the viscid humors of the stomach, viscera and lungs; producing eruptions on the skin; these at times are of the most alarming appearance, so much so, that they have been mistaken by the ignorant for varioloid. These should not be checked by any outward application, as it is the most favorable indication that this unique medicine is "doing its perfect work," towards eradicating the disease and purifying the blood: such *marks* best denoting its progress. It will then only require the patience of a few days to bestow the reward of a renewed existence, free from afflictive distempers. These eruptions, especially in scrofulous cases, first appear as red spots, which spread rapidly over the body, and soon after present the appearance of minute biles, with a white apex or exterior; in about six days these begin to dry up and disappear; in six or eight days subsequent all vestiges of the same are gone, and a cure may be pronounced. It will however be well to purge the bowels with senna, scidletz-powders, or any other mild purgative, lest any of the acrimonious humor should remain undisturbed by the *Canchalagua*. The eruptions, far from being an unfavorable or alarming symptom, are precisely what is required; as the constitution is not debilitated by this mode of purification, which is too apt to be the case by frequent purgatives. The Proprietor offers these suggestions and remarks, growing out of his observation of the practical results of the use of his medicine; believing that a few lines of personal experience are worth volumes of theoretic notions, with the view to counteract the prepossessions of the timid, and remove all apprehensions which may arise from the potent, yet natural effects of this invaluable purifier of the blood.

The introduction of this invaluable plant is **EXCITING GENERAL ATTENTION**, from its wondrous restorative properties. All who have tested the same in cases of Fever and Ague, Nervous, Pulmonary and Cutaneous disorders, or disease originating in impurity of the blood, ascribe to it unparalleled efficacy. Its intrinsic merit needs only to be appreciated to place it in the most prominent position among the most

popular medicines of the day. Its cures, in many instances, are so immediate and eradicated, as to elicit attestations in its favor from the most unexpected sources. Dr. Townsend, the manufacturer of "Townsend's Sarsaparilla," an article, from the sale of which he is supposed to have realized a fortune, has admitted publicly that this Californian plant is "far better than Sarsaparilla," and is "the cheapest and best medicine in the world." His judgment and experience are entitled to some consideration on the part of the public—and undoubtedly they will confirm his decision in regard to its merits. So far as it relates to its "cheapness," in this, too, they must agree, as the number of doses, being a single tea-spoonful only in the Canchalagua, exceeds those in a quart bottle of Sarsaparilla, and the cost of transportation of the former article is not one-third as much, owing to the diminished size of the bottles and packages. It is already necessary to caution the public against spurious medicines offered for sale as Canchalagua.

Notwithstanding the short time which has elapsed since its introduction, individuals have been found base and unprincipled enough to offer their vile compounds under this name. The genuine article has the name of the proprietor on the bottle, and a fac simile of his signature attached to the directions, pasted on the bottle, as also on the outside salmon colored envelope; the cork also bears the impression of "Gay's Canchalagua." It will be borne in mind in the perusal of the annexed certificates of cures, that it is now only about four months since the Canchalagua was introduced by me extensively into this country, so that in this short period the cases which have been reported may be considered as unprecedented. The cases of cures, not published at this time, which have been communicated from the most respectable sources are numerous, but are withheld at present from a reluctance on the part of those benefitted to affix their names to any document to be published, and on my part from an unwillingness to give publicity to the same without leave obtained. In the course of a single year there cannot be a doubt that the number of testimonials in its favor will more than equal those of other medicines of many years' standing.

Letter from THOMAS SHAW, Esq., one of our oldest merchants engaged in the trade with the *Western Coast of America*, well known in the United States from his connection with the *American Baptist Missionary Union* :

Boston, April 17, 1848.

DEAR SIR—You inform me that you have prepared an Extract from a well known medicinal plant growing in California, called CANCHALAGUA, and request me to state what I know in relation to its properties.

Having been engaged in commercial transactions, and spent many years on the Coast of California, it may be presumed that I had become somewhat acquainted with the plant in

question, and had known something of its superior merits. I confess that I have not given it that attention that many others have; yet, notwithstanding, I may venture to hazard an opinion. As to its effects, from personal experience, I can say nothing, having never made use of it; yet from witnessing its effects on others, and knowing the high estimation in which it is held by the people of California, and also by many individuals of this country, I hesitate not to say, that in my opinion it is one of the most valuable and certain specifics for Intermittent Fevers yet brought before the public; and, as a tonic, it stands unrivalled; also as a purifier of the blood it may claim pre-eminence.

In this age of Nostrums and Specifics for the cure of all diseases, it would seem of doubtful expediency to bring any new preparation before the community, but in the EXTRACT OF CANCHALAGUA there can be no risk, as, once brought into use, no family would consent to be without it. That you may meet the encouragement which the introduction of this highly beneficial preparation deserves, is the sincere wish of

Your obedient servant,

THOMAS SHAW.

The following letter has been received from one of our most respectable merchants. For over forty years he has been afflicted with scrofulous diseases; the entire system appeared contaminated, and within the last year an incessant cough led to the apprehension of tubercular consumption. In June last he was attacked by a disease which was pronounced by our physicians to be Small Pox; at this time he commenced taking the EXTRACT OF CANCHALAGUA, and continued the same, to the exclusion of every other medicine, until the scrofulous humors were eradicated from his system, and all indications of the Small Pox had been overcome.

New-York, August 30, 1848.

Mr. Fred. A. Gay—Dear Sir: I take much satisfaction in being able to add my recommendation to the many you have received in favor of your unequalled "Canchalagua." I speak from experience, having used it, and derived from its purifying and invigorating qualities, speedy and positive benefits. As a purifier of the blood—as an eradicator of humors—as a tonic—and as a remedy to mitigate the Small Pox or Varioloid, there is nothing like it. I shall always be happy to have you refer your applicants to me, and only hope that their experience may be as well rewarded as mine has been.

Yours very truly,

B. W. MUDGE,

No. 43 New street.

Fever and Ague.

Having, in several instances, witnessed beneficial results from the use of "GAY'S CANCHALAGUA," and especially in cases of Fever and Ague, I am induced to inform you of the particulars in an extreme case, which

came under my especial notice. Early in June, Elizabeth Brady was sent to me by a physician; she had then been suffering for more than two months, with severe paroxysms of fever and ague, and her friends were desirous to send her to the hospital; but by the recommendation of the physician she was removed to my house and placed under my care. I gave her regularly your Extract of Canchalagua, and was much gratified to perceive an immediate change and rapid improvement; in five days she was perfectly well, and left the city to visit her friends in Connecticut. The quantity taken was less than one bottle, in doses of a single teaspoonful, three times each day. Having graduated in the University in Scotland, of which I have a diploma, and being well known to most of our respectable physicians, I am in hopes this testimony in regard to your valuable medicine, will be received with confidence, and be of service to you.

ELIZABETH HAMILTON,
47 Mott street.

To the Proprietor of Gay's Canchalagua, 36 Broadway.

New York, Aug. 3, 1848.

Diseases of the Liver and Kidneys, Pulmonary Affections, &c., cured.

The proprietor has been honored by the annexed communication from R. H. WINSLOW, Esquire, one of our most eminent BANKERS in Wall street.

New-York, Sept. 14, 1848.

To Frederick A. Gay, Esq.

MY DEAR SIR—I cheerfully comply with your request in acknowledging with others the benefit which I have derived from the use of your *Extract of Canchalagua*, or California Plant.

Its effects upon my system are evident and gratifying, and have induced me to recommend its use to my friends; and I am pleased to assure you that in no instance have I been disappointed in its efficacy.

I do not hesitate in my confidence in its remarkable medicinal qualities, and to state that I believe it will be found to be an excellent remedy in most cases of disease of the liver and kidneys, in pulmonary affections, and also in the purification of the blood, &c.

That your merit in the introduction of this invaluable Plant may be appreciated, is the sincere wish of

Your's sincerely,
R. H. WINSLOW.

Cure of Rheumatism.

Orange, N. J., June 6, 1848.

DEAR SIR—I have for several years suffered with that trying disorder the Rheumatism, particularly in my legs, arms, and blade bones. I have been prevented frequently from attending

to my business owing to the severity of my pains, which were so great at times as to deprive me of rest. I have found in your Extract of Canchalagua, which I was induced to try from reading one of your advertisements, such relief, that I cannot refrain from writing to unite my testimonial to the many you must necessarily have of its great value to persons similarly afflicted with myself. I have not yet finished the first bottle, and do not think it will be necessary for me to continue its use.

Your's sincerely,
JAMES B. SNOW.

Cure of Bilious Fever.

New-York, Sept. 8, 1848.

SIR—I am anxious to inform you how much benefit I have derived from your Extract of Canchalagua during the past summer. I have just returned from a visit to the West. During my stay of three months in Illinois, I suffered from a severe attack of Bilious Fever, brought on by exposure and fatigue; it was attended with intense and constant pain and dizziness in my head, and the most acute pain over my whole body, especially in my back, with great oppression and nausea. I was sick about ten days, and during that time took no other medicine than your Canchalagua, which had been highly recommended by my friends who had been benefitted by its use. I am confident that I owe my rapid and complete recovery to it alone. In the Western States, where fevers are so prevalent, so powerful and certain a remedy as this has proved to be, cannot do otherwise than well, and if properly introduced must meet with extraordinary success.

Very respectfully your obedient servant,
JAMES TALLMADGE, Junr.

General Debility and Decline.

ROBERT SCHUYLER, Esquire, of this city, President of the New Haven Rail Road Company, informs me, that *twelve* years ago he was induced by his friends in Boston to use the Canchalagua, at which time he was suffering under a pulmonary disease, and fears were entertained of a rapid decline, that it entirely cured him, since which he has never been without it in his family.

Erysipelas and Asthma.

MRS. MARGARETTA HAWES, No. 1 Carroll Place, was for about a year subject to the most virulent Erysipelas, and for several years to an asthmatic complaint which rendered her breathing at times exceedingly difficult and which was a source of much uneasiness; she has now happily been relieved from both by the use of the Extract of Canchalagua.

Dyspepsia Cured.

New-York, Sept. 13, 1848.

DEAR SIR—With much pleasure I inform you that for the last two months my wife has been

taking your Extract of Canchalagua, from which she has received great and essential benefit. For many years she has been afflicted with Dyspepsia to a great degree, receiving but partial relief hitherto from any of the prescriptions of her medical advisers. To the use of your Canchalagua I attribute her present improved state of health; and with the confidence I have in the extraordinary powers of your preparation, it will afford me pleasure to recommend the same to others on all occasions.

Yours, &c.

THOMAS J. GOODWIN,
294 Fourth street.

Cure of Scrofula and Glandular Affections.

In June last John G. Cooley of Cooperstown, N. Y., called at the Depot to make enquiries in relation to the efficacy of the Canchalagua in scrofulous diseases. He was then on his way to the sea shore, where his physicians had recommended him to remain for the purpose of bathing, as no medicine which they had prescribed had been of any service. His appearance was distressing, covered with eruptions and ulcerations and the glands of the neck much swollen and pendulent. He was satisfied, from the representations made to him of the importance of the Canchalagua in the cure of Scrofula, and took a bottle of the Extract away with him, fully determined to make trial of the same. A letter was received from him sometime afterwards from which a few extracts are made.

“Cooperstown, N. Y., July 31, 1848.

“DEAR SIR—I take this method of informing you of the benefit which I have received from the use of your valuable extract with which I was furnished by you in June last. It agrees with me so far, and I shall continue to use it, until I am perfectly cured. I shall not have to take more than one bottle more, which will, if I continue to improve for the next six weeks, as I have improved during the last, entirely rid me of one of the worst of diseases to which we are exposed. My friends when they meet me, notice the great change in my appearance, and look upon it and speak of it as a miracle. The Physicians here under whose care I have formerly been, are astonished and say the improvement is wonderful. There are several cases similar to mine in this place, and I could sell a number of bottles. If you will send me a box of the same I will send you the cash by a friend of mine who is coming down the last of the week, &c.

“Your's &c.

“JOHN G. COOLEY.”

Constipation, or Costiveness overcome.

Homer, Licking Co., O., Aug., 2, 1848.

SIR—I promised to write to you and inform you of the success of your medicine. I am pleased to do so, and to assure you of my re-

covery for which I am satisfied I am entirely indebted to the use of the Canchalagua. I have not yet completed the bottle I had of you, which renders my cure the more remarkable. I suffer no longer from those horrible spasms and pains in the loins of which I spoke to you, my strength and appetite are in a great measure restored; I can now eat the regular meals without apprehension of a return of those distressing pulsations, feelings of faintness, sleeplessness and other effects of bad indigestion which have hitherto been so common; as they gradually abated in their intensity I began to appreciate the importance of your medicinal preparation, and I now have so much confidence in it, that I should not be willing to be without it. Have you an Agent in this vicinity? if not, I shall be pleased to act as such; although I do not deal in medicines, yet I think I could do well with yours. Please inform me of your terms, which I hope you will make as favorable as possible.

Your obdt servant,

JAMES S. DUVAL.

Cure of Asthma.

Carthage, N. Y., May 27, 1848.

DEAR SIR—The important benefits I have received from the use of your Canchalagua, have influenced me to address you, to make known my acknowledgments to you. For several years my existence has been rendered truly miserable by the Asthma, and so severe was the disorder as to deprive me of strength and breath sufficient to enable me to walk up even a short flight of stairs without stopping, to sit down and rest, and very frequently I could not lie down to sleep without danger from suffocation, as my throat was constantly choked up with phlegm, which no medicine could relieve, until I was induced to try yours, when I found almost immediate relief; my breathing became regular, and the expectoration loosened, my appetite was restored, and my rest became calm and refreshing, my strength gradually increased, and I now after taking two bottles find myself able to attend to my business; my friends unite with me in the belief that I am cured; still, I shall continue to take one more bottle, when I shall be enabled to speak more confidently, when I will again write to you.

In the meanwhile, I remain truly and sincerely yours, &c. REDMOND POST.

Bilious Complaints.

Palmyra, Harrison Co., Ind., June 30, 1848.

SIR—Your new medicine is doing wonders here. We have already sold about one-half of the quantity purchased of you, although it has not been in our store one month, and we wish you to send us five dozen by Griffith's Line. Mr. Miles has himself taken it for a bilious complaint which has lasted over six years, and he thinks himself cured. We hope to be able to send you some valuable certificates soon.

Yours, &c.

SWIFT & MILES.

Use of Limbs restored—Rush of Blood to the Head Cured.

New-York, Aug. 18, 1848.

DEAR SIR—I am much pleased, to have it in my power to acknowledge the great benefits derived in my family by the use of your Extract of Canchalagua. My wife, in her youth, was wounded in her right arm so severely, that she has never until now had the complete use of the same. It has been attended with frequent pains of the most acute nature, and, at times, it would become so benumbed as to deprive her of the use of the same. In the summer of 1844, from a severe fall, her side and hip were so much injured as to have been a continual source of pain and anxiety to her. It remained discolored, and the entire limb was affected by it so as at times to render it impossible for her to walk without assistance. She commenced taking your medicine about a month ago, since when she has taken two bottles, and the effect has been such, that the discoloration of the hip has vanished, all the pain is gone, and she has the free use of her limb, and now walks as well as she ever did. She has also recovered the use of her arm, and has had no pain since taking the first bottle, and we all consider her as perfectly restored to the use of her limbs. I have been troubled for over five years with a rush of blood to the head, which has rendered it impossible for me to attend to my business, causing a loss of sight and memory whilst under the influence of the same. After taking a single bottle I found myself relieved, and having now completed the second bottle with no returns of these symptoms, I am confident that I am entirely free from these attacks, and have no reason to believe they will return. My general health has improved, and I have every reason to be grateful for the benefits received through your instrumentality in the introduction of this valuable medicine.

A. D. PERRY, 220 Cherry-st

Cure of Consumption.

Wellsboro, Pa., July 7, 1848.

SIR—Having received so wonderful a cure from the use of your Extract of Canchalagua, I feel it to be my duty, in gratitude to you, the great instrument, under Providence, for the introduction of this invaluable medical plant into our country, which is of such vast importance to the afflicted, to thus render public acknowledgment of my obligations for my restoration to health. For the last seven years I have been afflicted with an internal aneurism, attended with constant throbbings of the heart, and nervous derangement, with spasms and tremors, agonizing pains in my liver and stomach, also in my back, and often in my side. I frequently had attacks of spitting of blood accompanied by a cough, when I expectorated constantly pus or matter. My breathing at times was extremely difficult. I had copious night-sweats. I became feeble and emaciated. The physicians pronounced my case Consumption, and gave me

no encouragement for its cure. I myself began to despair of the same; when a friend put into my hands your interesting pamphlet in relation to the *Canchalagua* recently introduced by you from California. I read with much gratification the account of the wonderful medicinal qualities ascribed to it, and was convinced of the truth of the representations. I immediately determined to try it, and sent to your city for two bottles. I commenced taking two teaspoonsful three times a day. Finding that it affected my bowels, I confined myself to one teaspoonful at a dose. I soon became sensible of a beneficial change in my system. My appetite returned, the perspiration at night ceased, my strength increased, and my evacuation became daily less. I continued its use; by the time I had finished the first bottle, my pains and all nervous affections had left me. I determined to persevere, and have not completed the second bottle, and have full confidence in a perfect restoration to health by the use of one or two bottles more. I enclose the amount for one dozen bottles, as I wish to diffuse its benefits to others similarly afflicted, as well as to have a supply for myself, which you will please send by the bearer, Mr. Wright, who will take charge of the same.

I can but poorly express all that my grateful heart dictates. I can only say that through the life prolonged through your instrumentality, you will be ever held in respectful remembrance.

With sincere thankfulness, I am, sir, yours,
JAMES S. FINCH.

An Antidote for Poisons.

New-York, Sept. 6, 1848.

SIR—During an excursion into the country, the last summer, I was badly poisoned by some wild plant growing in the woods; the surface of my skin was covered with eruptions highly irritating and painful; it entered into my system and circulation, infecting the blood, at times attended with acute pain in the throat, stomach and bowels, also with stupor and heaviness, so much so as to interrupt my business, as I was confined to my chamber in consequence, over a week. An apothecary in Broadway, whom I consulted in regard to the same, advised me to try your Extract of Canchalagua. I did so, and am much gratified in making known the result: by a single bottle a perfect cure has been effected, for which I am most grateful, and shall be pleased to learn that the introduction of your valuable medicine receives the favor it merits. Very respectfully your obdt serv't.

DAVID D. VOORHEES,
No. 4 William street.

TREMONT TEMPERANCE HOUSE,
New-York, Sept. 4, 1848. }

SIR—I have often noticed your publications of the great medicinal qualities of your CANCHALAGUA, but, like many others, I paid but little attention to your advertisements, presuming they were like most of the New York puffs; but, sir, I am induced to change my

conclusions as to your medicine, in consequence of reading a work written by my personal friend, published by the Messrs. Appleton's of this city, last summer; I find therein its qualities described, with the highest commendation, and I know Edwin Bryant, of Kentucky, is incapable of writing any thing but what is absolutely true. I allude to his work entitled "What I saw in California." By looking toward the latter part of the book, you will see what he has written. You will do well to give his opinions publicity. A good medicine is a blessing to the public, and so is he who gives it, and both should be known to the world.

Yours truly,

THOS. W. H. MOSELEY,
of Columbus, Ohio

To the Proprietor of Gay's Canchalagua
Depot, 36 Broadway.

Inflammatory Rheumatism, Excessive Bleeding, Pros- tration and Resuscitation.

New York, Sept. 14, 1848.

DEAR SIR—Owing to the great benefit I have derived personally, as well as in my child, from the use of your valuable Extract of *Canchalagua*, I feel it an act of justice to you, and a still greater act of benevolence to the public, to give the following facts for publication as they occurred in April last.

My son, a lad of six years of age, was taken with acute pains in his limbs, similar to Inflammatory Rheumatism, changing its position from the legs to the arms, head, &c.; he had but partially recovered from this attack when he was taken with a profuse bleeding from the nose, which continued for nearly *four hours*. On my return home, from my place of business, I found he had then been bleeding two hours; all attempts to stop it were unavailing, and my family were much alarmed. I immediately called in the aid of a physician; the only means adopted to check the same was a firm compression of the nostrils; the child was held in this manner, until he dropped asleep from exhaustion. We all thought the hemorrhage had ceased; the child was laid on the bed, and as we supposed, was quietly sleeping, and were much relieved from our apprehensions; but the bleeding still continued and flowed into the stomach; in about an hour and a half afterwards we were all much alarmed at symptoms of strangulation. I rushed to the bed and took my child in my arms; as there appeared a disposition to vomit, my wife held a small vessel holding a pint, which he filled at one discharge from his stomach; this was repeated a second time when my wife fainted, supposing he could not exist but a short time; he afterwards vomited the third time a similar quantity, and I speak within bounds in saying that he lost *over two quarts of blood*. I mention this thus particularly to show what a pale and ghastly object it left him. It was about a week after this, finding that he had no appetite and did not improve, that I called upon you to ask your

opinion as to administering your Extract of *Canchalagua*, which I was induced to do from the wonderful accounts I had heard of its restorative qualities. Notwithstanding you declined your advice, or recommending the use of your medicine in this extreme case, still I found you had so much confidence in its virtues, that you inspired me with a determination to try it. I took a bottle of it home with me and gave half of a teaspoonful to the child that evening, and continued it three times a day, giving it about three quarters of an hour before his eating; in a few days I found him rapidly improving and I increased the dose to one teaspoonful, which I continued for four weeks. He is now *in better health than he ever has been*, as far as I can judge, although his physician thought he would never be a healthy child. In my own case, I am certain it has been of great service as a most remarkable purifier of the blood. Hoping this statement may tend to give confidence in the same, and extend its usefulness,

I remain your obedient servant,

E. B. BEAUMONT,
152 Broadway.

*The following testimonials are selected from
the communications of Agents, &c.*

RUSHTON, CLARK & Co., New-York:

"The sales of your Extract of *Canchalagua* far exceed that of any other new medical preparation we have ever dealt in, and we are well satisfied that it is destined to become the most popular of any hitherto introduced into this country. We are gratified to be able to inform you of the perfect satisfaction expressed by our customers in its efficacy, of which we ourselves have evidence in numerous cases of Scrofula, Fever and Ague, Pulmonary complaints, Dyspepsia, Rheumatism, &c."

BREWERS, STEVENS & CUSHING, Boston:

"We are selling the *Canchalagua* daily, and doubt not the sales will steadily increase. It is a gratifying feature in the applications for the article, that persons are willing, in very many instances, to buy the same at once, without seeking deposits on sale. This is very unusual with an article of so recent origin. We shall require two gross to answer orders, during next week, and will be obliged by your forwarding the same. The article is received here with all the favor we could expect, knowing the character of our citizens; indeed, we think no article has ever been introduced, that opened with more encouraging prospects."

H. HARRIS, Norwich, Chenango Co., N. Y.

The invaluable California plant, as its merits are developed, is rapidly superseding every medicine as a simple means of exciting the healthy action of the stomach and preserving its tone. In Fevers, Pulmonary complaints and all diseases which may be traced to constipation of the bowels, or impurity of the blood, its superior efficacy is commending it to general attention.

Taken as a tonic, I have personally experienced its powerful effects, and can amply testify to the relief it afforded.

As a *household medicine*, it may be deemed invaluable; as an antidote it is unsurpassed in all maladies tending to *pulmonary affections*; as a *febrifuge* and *purifier of the blood*, its medicinal qualities are without equal, and as a tonic, it is the *ne plus ultra*.

With great regard,

Your obedient servant,

JOHN C. JONES.

Letter from ALFRED ROBINSON, Esc, author of "*Life in California*."

NEW YORK, January 27th, 1848.

DEAR SIR:

I will comply, with pleasure, to your request, and impart such knowledge as I possess of the essential qualities of the CANCHALAGUA, a plant but little known as yet in the United States, but which from its superior medicinal properties, is destined to supersede many of the drugs now in common use.

During a long residence in *Alta California*, I had frequent opportunities of witnessing its beneficial effects, and of observing the great estimation with which it was regarded by the inhabitants generally; thus enabling me to write freely, and with great confidence, as to its astonishing medicinal virtues.

A supply of it, there, in every family, is considered of *vital importance*, as essential to enable them to regulate and invigorate the system, which is apt to become enervated by the prolonged heat of the climate. Among the *Californians* it is pronounced as an unquestionable remedy for *fever* and *ague*, and is made use of by them in all the complex forms of *inflammations* and *fevers*, to which they are subject.

In the spring of the year, it is resorted to as a matter of course, when an infusion of it is drank, two or three times a day, for about a week; in order to promote a healthy state of the animal functions, through a PURIFICATION OF THE BLOOD, for which it is most remarkable. It imparts tone and vigor to the stomach and digestive organs, and regulates all nervous and arterial derangements.

When Professor *Nuttall*, formerly of Harvard University, visited *California*, in 1836, this plant received his particular attention, but then in a dried state; and I cannot account for his omission to lay before the public a specification of its properties and character, except that his visit was at a period, too early in the season to behold it in bloom, at which time only can it be distinguished, and then is collected and stored up for consumption. I am confident, the weight of his influence would have, before this, brought it into general use, and thus have alleviated much human suffering.

You ask if *Sarsaparilla* is found in *California*? It certainly is, and in great abundance; but little or no use, however, is made of it as a medicine, for the reason that the inhabitants give preference to *Canchalagua*, as possessing all the virtues of the former in a higher degree, and as more immediate in its restorative action.

Very respectfully,

Your obedient servant,

ALFRED ROBINSON.

NEW YORK, February 28th, 1848

Having been for several years engaged in the North West Trade, I have become acquainted with the virtues of the medicinal plant called CANCHALAGUA; and readily concur in the above statements of its remarkable properties

MUEL J. HASTINGS

